

Tidy Towns Competition 2017

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Newtownshandrum** Ref: **1288**
County: **Cork(North)** Mark: **248**
Category: **B** Date(s): **06/07/2017**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2016	Mark Awarded 2017
Community Involvement & Planning	60	30	31
Built Environment and Streetscape	50	34	34
Landscaping and Open Spaces	50	33	33
Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities	50	13	13
Sustainable Waste and Resource Management	50	12	14
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	53	54
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	35	36
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	32	33
TOTAL MARK	450	242	248

Community Involvement & Planning / Rannpháirtíocht an Phobail & Pleanáil:

Newtownshandrum is very welcome to the 2017 Tidy Towns competition. Considering this is only your fourth year in the competition you have achieved a huge amount and are clearly very well organised with your comprehensive three year plan. You also have a very impressive number of volunteers both on and off your committee – this reflects a great community spirit in Newtownshandrum. Lots of communication and working with your fellow community groups in the area and seeking the support and advice available from agencies, bodies and businesses are all vital tools for a Tidy Towns committee to function at its best. Many thanks for the helpful, large maps.

Built Environment and Streetscape / An Timpeallacht Thógtha agus Sráid-dreacha:

Newtownshandrum features a large number and variety of type of vernacular houses and cottages. This is a wonderful feature of your village which should be celebrated and protected where possible. It is noted in your Action Plan that noticeboards on the old buildings are planned – this is great as creating awareness for both the resident and visitor is hugely important for the conservation of these buildings. The village is clearly well looked after and cared for with all the public buildings such as the church, the G.A.A. centre and the Community Centre very well presented. Also Shandrum Engineering Services had their premises very well painted with some nice hanging baskets to brighten it up.

Landscaping and Open Spaces / Tírdhreachú agus Spásanna Oscailte:

The row of Sweet peas on the Milford road looked gorgeous as the village was entered on adjudication day. The newly landscaped well and pump area was visited. Clearly a lot of work has gone into its creation and we look forward to phase 2 of this project – may we suggest some more planting to lighten the greyness of the new gravel? Perhaps some trees typical of waterside locations such as Alder, Birch or Weeping Willow might do well here.

Wildlife, Habitats and Natural Amenities / Fiadhúlra, Gnáthóga agus Taitneamhachtaí Nádúrtha:

Newtownshandrum is situated in an area rich in biodiversity and a few projects over the coming years will add to the biodiversity of the village while improving quality of life for all. Make sure to obtain your free copy of the extremely helpful community version of the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan from the National Biodiversity Data Centre (www.biodiversityireland.ie). This together with the schools version will have lots of ideas for your committee and also possible joint projects you could do in conjunction with the village school, the G.A.A. club and local residents' associations. On adjudication day a lot of unnecessary weedkiller use was noted around the village – in particular around tree bases in the Highfield Estate and beside the new pump-well area. This is unsightly and unnecessary in the case of the trees and with weedkiller being a pesticide it kills the pollinator species you are trying to encourage

with the bug hotel and wildflowers. Consult the Pollinator Plan for lots of helpful ideas and suggestions for your bug hotel area. You have been very proactive in relation to invasive species – well done- your monitoring work will be very helpful to the authorities in relation to Japanese knotweed which is causing problems all over Ireland.

Sustainable Waste and Resource Management / Bainistiú Acmhainní agus Dramhaíola Inbhuanaithe:

Your new watering system looks like a great system and well done on re-using and re-purposing the equipment! Also well done on sourcing manure and recycling centre compost – this is a great example that hopefully other Tidy Towns groups will follow. Also your elimination of grass cutting waste is highly commendable as rotting grass in ditches around the country can be awful eyesores as well as sources of pollution. Well done on all these commendable actions.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

Newtownshandrum was very tidy and litter free on the adjudication day reflecting the hard work of all your volunteers. Both your Townland Spring Clean and Dog litter initiatives are great ideas to help manage different litter problems.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

All areas are well kept and maintained in general. It was noted how a few vacant houses on the main street had been painted up to keep them looking as good as possible. This is a difficult task and the effort is noted together with your plans for a project/survey of the historically interesting and valuable vernacular houses and cottages of Newtownshandrum. We look forward to the outcome of this project. Some of the trees in the green area of High Field need replacing – Cherry blossom trees don't always do well in these type of open Green areas – maybe you might consider the native Whitebeam or Rowans which have interest across much of the year and they benefit wildlife too.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

Newtownshandrum's approach roads feature some lovely hedgerows and trees giving a lovely leafy entrance to the village in summer, however, a section between the Grotto and the village had been recently sprayed at its base. This is not good practice as without the herbaceous plant roots to bind it together, the soil loosens and then gets washed away during rain thus destabilising the hedgebank. All roads signs were clean and easy to read. The Grotto looked very well tended and recently painted with some great pollinator-friendly planting and the row of Sweet peas on the Milford Road were delightful!

Concluding Remarks:

Well done to all who work on and with your active Committee. You have made great achievements in your four short years in the competition and we look forward to a return visit in the future to see the potential for great (vernacular architecture and biodiversity projects in particular!) projects fulfilled.